



The Round-Up of the Sinn Feiners

By HUGH CURRAN

Dublin, Ireland, March, 1920.

THE British Government's policy in regard to Sinn Fein is still one of "Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would.'" It could in twenty-four hours take such measures as would severely punish Sinn Fein for all the trouble and annoyance which that organization gives to the Irish executive. But what measures would they be? They must involve much bloodshed and loss of life. This the British Government dares not do, and for reasons which are obvious to all.

From the British point of view stern measures would be justified; they have been over and over called for. The British military authorities would be glad to get a general order for punitive measures to put an end once and for all to the constant pin-pricking which goes on. But in such an event what a world-wide row would be raised! Not alone the Irish in Great Britain, the Irish in America, the Irish in Australia and in the colonies, but public opinion throughout the world would be roused in protest. And at this moment the British Government, more than at any other time, has no desire for a demonstration of this kind. Therefore, firm government gives way and there are only sporadic sorties against the Sinn Fein strongholds.

In these circumstances the Dublin Castle authorities are placed in a difficult and futile position. They have the military machinery but have not the power to put it in motion. Meantime Sinn Fein continues its persistent and well-arranged plan of making life intolerable for the "English garrison." Propaganda work is industriously carried on in secret, attacks on police barracks are of almost nightly occurrence, seditious leaflets are put in circulation, and in most of the public boards which have now been captured by the dominant political party, contempt of England is openly expressed, and members pass resolutions according their loyalty and allegiance to the Dail Eireann (republican parliament), and to it alone. All these elements tend only in one direction; to make the English occupation of Ireland impossible.

The Irish executive knows what is going on, but is powerless to prevent it. Prosecutions and trials in the ordinary way would probably fail because of the difficulty of finding witnesses who would give evidence upon which a conviction could be obtained. And so the only weapon which remains is the Defense of the Realm Act, a war measure which still continues to operate in Ireland. Under this it is possible to arrest and deport as undesirable persons who are known to hold the views of Sinn Fein. It is a futile and utterly inadequate measure from the British standpoint, but it is all that is left. Thus it is, from time to time, leaders of the agitation are quietly arrested and shipped across to England, chiefly to the celebrated prison at Wormwood Scrubbs.

Recently a round-up on a big scale had been planned by the military authorities but it was only partially successful. It was arranged to visit the homes of a number of prominent Sinn Feiners simultaneously between 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning, and it was intended that in this way a big batch would be dispatched to England. At the hour appointed on Saturday morning military and police parties set out on their errand, but to their astonishment at a large number of houses visited the persons they sought were "not at home." In a word the plan apparently had become known to the Sinn Feiners with the result that in the whole country only 65 persons were taken into custody and deported. Many of these were elected members of Parliament who refused to take their seats in the British House of Commons and many others recently had been elected members of the local municipal councils.

In many ways these raids and arrests are puerile proceedings, and particularly so when they fail of their object. They are unfortunate in the way they bring the armed forces into conflict with the people, for needless to say, they are not treated to banquets by the crowds who assemble.

Last night in a Dublin street I came upon a detachment of soldiers, all fully accoutered, wearing trench helmets and carrying fixed bayonets. They were accompanying a motor lorry. The lorry was being driven slowly and the soldiers followed, while after them came a noisy crowd of youths who in turn shouted and sang the "Soldier's Song." They shouted expressions which were anything but complimentary to the military, and it was obvious that very little provocation would have been needed to lead to tragic results. The soldiers, however, kept their heads and after a little time they were all taken into the lorry and driven quickly away amid the execrations of the crowd. The incident was illustrative of daily happenings both in Dublin and in the provinces, and it is inevitable that occasions will occur when there will be unfortunate sequels. The worst feature of the deporting of these prisoners is that they have not been tried and consequently have not been found guilty of any offense.

British justice demands that a prisoner be held innocent until he is proved guilty. All these cases of deportation are therefore direct violations of the most elementary principle of British law. Needless to say the most is made of this fact for the enlightenment of people with whom the British Government desires to stand well. Only recently one of these deportees, Alderman Thomas Kelly, was elected lord mayor of Dub-

lin, and it is now suggested that if he continues to be detained a deputation from the Dublin corporation will demand the right to visit him in prison and invest him with the historic gold chain which is the badge of his high office.

From every point of view the present situation here is deplorable. It is bad for the government that these deportations should have to take place, for it is perfectly clear that simple justice demands that they cannot be held in custody for any considerable time without trial, and when the time comes the government must liberate them with the knowledge that it has not reformed the individuals but has, in reality, merely made them "martyrs" in the cause of Ireland. Then again it is bad for the country, for every series of arrests merely increases the bitterness of the already strong feeling against England. While these things go on there can be no progress, no application to business, no real attention to the material affairs of the country.

American Automobiles in England

FEARING that England would be flooded by American automobiles, the London Times sent a special writer to America six months ago to get a line on what America was and is doing toward capturing European trade. That writer now sounds an alarm a column long, and among other things, says:

"At this moment the public, utterly disgusted with the enforced wait for the cars it ordered from British factories months ago, is ready to buy anything which will convey it about its business. In many instances British cars are greatly preferred, but the disastrous delays which have so nearly wrecked British trade have had their effect, and patriotism as well as personal inclination is being sacrificed. A car is what is wanted, and it is wanted immediately. There are not nearly enough British cars to supply the demand, and so American machines get the chance so long awaited. Immediate delivery is the cry. Any car today is better than the car we want next year.

"There is no comparison between the good American cars of 1915 and those of 1920. A certain number have deteriorated, but the great majority of the better-known makes have improved out of all recognition. They are faster, more powerful on hills, quieter, better designed, far more solidly constructed, more comfortable and enormously better looking. At a normal rate of exchange and free of the 33 1-3 duty, their prices would make them well-nigh irresistible. As it is and with our own prices monstrously swollen, they may prove to be a very real danger to the British maker."

To Pay Back the Loan

"THE decision of the British and French governments to repay at maturity the loan of \$500,000,000 issued in the United States on their behalf in October, 1915, will be welcomed as a definite step in the direction of recuperation in the matter of international obligations," says the Glasgow Herald. "The announcement has created a good deal of surprise in banking and other circles that appreciate the nature of the financial legacy left by the war, but this only serves to emphasize the satisfactory character of the measure contemplated by the two governments.

"It may be recalled that the issue now to be repaid constituted the first private loan operation in America following the breakdown of the exchange between this country and the United States. It was the only loan granted without specific security previous to America's participation in the war, being raised on the individual and joint credit of the two nations, each being responsible for the entire sum in the event of the failure of either to meet the obligation. The due date is October 15, next."

Advertising a \$16,000 Job

THE Liverpool council has advertised for a town clerk, the salary offered being \$16,500 a year. Commenting on it the Liverpool Courier says: "This is by no means startling for a big city like Liverpool, but it is reasonable, and ought to attract the attention of many gentlemen eminently qualified for a post demanding high qualities in character, professional attainment, and, let it be added, business ability. The last-mentioned quality indeed is one to which municipalities in general are attaching ever-increasing importance.

"Any one knowing a little of how the vast business of a great city corporation is managed is aware that immense amounts of money may be saved, and necessary schemes initiated and carried through to success with due economy and speed by a town clerk who is, in the broad sense, a business man."

New Political Campaign Method

WHEN politics was becoming interesting in Cape Town, South Africa, Mrs. Johanna Brandt, an author, said she had a message from heaven, and the message became very much of an issue in the campaign. It read: "The Lord of Lords informed His handmaiden that He intended to free South Africa through the Nationalist party, and the time had come to overthrow the present corrupt government." The Nationalists said it was genuine; the opponents said it was an attempt to play on the religious credulity of the Dutch people. Even General Smuts was drawn into the controversy.

Spain Still Running on Narrow Gauge

By HUGH WOODSTOCK

TO THE realization of the grand dream of a Gibraltar tunnel and a through trip from London via the Dover-Calais tunnel to Dakar on the West African coast, and thence by steamer to Pernambuco, Brazil, there is only one genuine obstacle. The Spanish railways are not standard gauge. Hence the vital link is missing.

The fact that the Spanish railways are narrow-gauge exactly represents the general character of the railways themselves. The whole system belongs to the narrow-gauge era.

The Spanish parliament regularly discusses the problem of Spanish transportation, and as regularly does nothing about it. Few Spanish parliaments ever do do anything about anything. This is not satire. The whole history of Spanish politics in recent years is a story of confusion and collapse. Crisis follows crisis almost as a daily experience, and it is even difficult for a ministry to hold together long enough to pass a budget, a task which all parties know must be accomplished, and on which there is generally some unanimity of opinion but a ragged incoherence of action. The first railroad was built in Spain in 1848, 70 years ago. Then followed a boom in 1899 which lasted nearly three years, and some construction of importance was effected in the Basque provinces, Santander, the Asturias and Catalonia. It is perhaps significant that these are the most prosperous provinces of all Spain, and Catalonia has grown to such industrial prosperity that she is tired of Spanish shiftlessness and demands autonomy.

The government took a hand in 1908, passing a law in the Cortes (Parliament) and strengthening it four years later, by which the state guaranteed grants at 5 per cent for secondary and strategic railways. The public barely noticed the bill and even the bankers blinked sleepily and, for the most part, ignored it. In fact, up until August, 1914, some 400 kilometers had been built under that legislation, and the national railways covered, all told, 15,000 kilometers (a kilometer is 3,280.8 feet).

With the beginning of the war, and the chaos in maritime affairs, the Spanish railway system promptly went to pieces; and when suddenly the new exorbitant sea rates made great demands on land transportation, the hollowness of the whole national system became glaringly obvious.

The Cortes talked about it a great deal and wrestled this way and that over the best remedy to apply. But nothing resulted and the railroads continued in a state of confusion.

In the early part of 1918 a national railway assembly was held in Madrid which urged the direct, absolute intervention of the state, with a view to remedying the inefficient service and building extensions. The then premier, Anton Maura, adopted the plan supported by the Catalanian, Senor Cambo, Minister of Public Works. Maura could not stay in office long enough to do anything, and with his fall there disappeared the beautiful plans for new railroads.

The year 1919 came and passed, and nothing was done. But, late in the year, a later premier, Sanchez de Toca, produced a great economic program as the absolute necessity to prevent revolution and national collapse. In this program was contained the elaborate plan of Senor Cambo for new railroads, Cambo wanting to transform the whole system into a modern standard-gauge equipment.

Senor Toca went the way of all premiers, but the present premier, Salazar, who may or may not last another month and already has tried to quit, took up the plans also; the program, too, has the sympathy and support of many leaders of several parties—men such as Count de Romanones, La Cierva, Alba, Alvarez, and the Socialist, Prieto.

As a result of this happy union of opinion it is expected that this premier or the next one will, during the year, obtain a bill looking to the construction of 1,500 kilometers of roads every year. The immediate result, of course, will be the stimulation to home industries and an increase in imports of foreign machinery. It will also give impetus to the development of natural resources, for, as every American knows, transportation is the one key to industry.

Electrification is talked of, especially for long trans-mountain lines. The country controls something like 5,000,000,000 horse power for electrification purposes, and uses only 12 per cent of it. The Catalonians particularly are urging the broader use of water power and great plans for hydro-electric projects are under way. One company has been organized at \$30,000,000 to utilize 350,000 horse power on the River Duero. These plans also call for large imports of machinery.

Spain has realized at last that she is, comparatively, a small country, and her prosperity must come in concert with the rest of Europe and, therefore, she must move with her neighbors in industrial and business foresight and enterprise. Moreover she desires to be in a position to develop large markets (half neglected by her in past years) in South America; and business organizations of Madrid and Barcelona have made no secret of their design to contest with the United States every inch of trade in Latin America.